

Rostrum

WHEN Hans Schirmacher last saw his attorney, he was told: "Have a holiday for two weeks. And during that time, prepare yourself psychologically for arrest."

Speaking to me this week, Schirmacher was plainly relieved to be (for the time being) out of the shadow of the Security Police. There was excitement in his voice as he sounded off against the architectural establishment, both in South Africa and in Britain, and described his hopes for the future. His hasty departure from South Africa has left him breathless, but not speechless.

Schirmacher, born in wartime Berlin and trained in the USA, had a successful career and several ISAA awards of merit under his belt, when in 1985 the revelation came that was to set him on a collision course with the Institute of South African Architects.

The catalyst that sparked off Schirmacher's conversion was Marion Crawford, a middle-class white convicted of illegally hiding a black man's offender from the police, who refused to pay her fine. In the context of the widespread injustice in South Africa's recent past, it was not such a huge act of defiance. What impressed Schirmacher was that this stand was taken by a woman who until then had been uninvolved in politics.

His own campaign began with a personal letter to the Transvaal Provincial Institute. "What triggered me was that the TPI invited Craywagen to their awards of merit function. He is the political boss of the Transvaal, and a political appointee."

He checked to see what was happening in the other provinces — and did not like what he found.

Tim Ostler talks to South African rebel architect Hans Schirmacher

Beating the drum



Schirmacher — determined.

practices with extensive government work) employees had been instructed to vote against the motion "or else".

But the AAP found that it had powerful allies too. Tony Mason, head of the property development arm of Harry Oppenheimer's huge Anglo American Mines, declared that his company would not turn to any architect who was not prepared to sign the declaration.

AAP now plans to set up a College of Architects to act as an

alternative institute in South Africa. How many members does he believe this College of Architects could attract? "It will depend a lot on the support that I can get from people like the RIBA and the UIA, because they are very important."

Schirmacher believes the view of the ISAA held by RIBA president Larry Rolland and some others in the RIBA — namely, that it is a benign organisation doing its best to ameliorate the situation in difficult circumstances — is

Hans Schirmacher will address a public meeting at the RIBA, 6 Portland Place, London W1, at 6pm on Monday.

sadly mistaken. In Johannesburg, the new Technikon was the subject of an architectural competition administered by the ISAA. Schirmacher, in his application for the conditions, asked whether the building was to be multiracial, with admission based on merit alone. He received the conditions without a reply. Schirmacher's next letter was answered with a phone call from the rector, asking if it would be all right to reply verbally. Schirmacher insisted on a written reply. The letter describing the terms under which the Technikon would operate finally arrived. Returned with it was his registration fee for the competition.

What does Schirmacher expect the RIBA to do?

"I don't care whether they throw the ISAA out or not. That is not my function for being here. What I would like to say to the RIBA is this: Give the College of Architects takes off and becomes a viable organisation how does he expect it to define form of practice that is morally acceptable yet viable in South Africa?

"It's very simple," says Schirmacher. "You draw a line between all those people who suffer under apartheid — who all require structures — and the structures that actually extend that suffering. And you don't do those structures."

That pressure of a sort already exists cannot be denied. Even among architects, the depression caused by the unrest has led to a staggering figure of 40 per cent out of work. But, despite previous setbacks, Schirmacher's is one of the few voices raised in optimism about the future.

The steering committee of AAP numbers 15. Can the RIBA really be expected to take seriously a group that is so small? Schirmacher says the numbers that have joined so far are not representative of the real level of sympathy generated by the sgn.

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institute in your lap. What I'm saying is, from the very beginning of this group, you have the chance to guide and to be involved."

But isn't it a bit anachronistic for the RIBA to cast itself in such a paternalistic role for the profession in another country of equal standing?

"We are isolated — never mind nationally, as a country — we are isolated within our country. And it is helpful to find that there is a body that is respected internationally that's giving us a chance. Because we won't get it at home — we have no status legally in our country, because we're not allowed to be in existence."

Will he expect the members of the new organisation to resign from the ISAA?

"No, it's too much to ask of people." But, just supposing the College of Architects takes off and becomes a viable organisation how does he expect it to define form of practice that is morally acceptable yet viable in South Africa?

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Clean-up project begins

RICHARD Branson's appointment as head of a new Government initiative to create jobs and clean up the environment is now official.

The scheme — first suggested to Branson by former environment minister Kenneth Baker — will be backed by £23 million of public money.

Speaking at the launch of the scheme in Halifax this week, environment secretary Nicholas Ridley said the work would be "a partnership between Government, the voluntary sector and the business world" and would provide challenging jobs for those taking part.

Jobs would centre round reclaiming neglected land for parks, city farms, or wildlife reserves conserving and restoring industrial heritage, helping tourists with better information, tackling litter, and improving neglected ponds, paths and woodlands.

The structures had been listed so late.

Committee member Jennifer Freeman told BD that Branson's "piecemeal approach" was not right for the area. She said a decision had been deferred so that the two councils — Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster — could work out a plan that took in a much wider area than that by Branson.

Branson commissioned archi-

tects Pinchin Kellow to draw up a scheme in 1984. As well as Virgin's new headquarters, it includes craft workshops and housing association units.

The local planning authority has welcomed the scheme, which it said would bring "life and vitality to a run-down area".

But the former Greater London Council objected to Branson's

Branson in planning row over Virgin HQ scheme

VIRGIN Records boss and rubbish minister Richard Branson is at the centre of a planning row over his plans to build a new headquarters at Portobello Dock, west London.

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But the former Greater Lon-

don Council objected to Branson's

proposals because it would

mean demolishing a 19th century horse ramp and deck, which were listed after Branson bought the site.

Officers at English Heritage

— which now controls Lon-

don's listed buildings — admit-

ted that the platform and bridge

leading to the ramp were in bad

condition, and could cost mil-

lions to repair.

Officers also told members of

the London Advisory Commit-

tee — who discussed Branson's

scheme at last week's meeting —

that the whole site was likely to

be "blown open" because of a

road-widening scheme, recently

given DoE approval, which

involves the loss of a listed stable

stable on Monday.

The meeting will take place at

the Orangery in Holland Park.

Tickets are £7. Details from Soo

Ward, 01-736 5197.

Welsh hope

THE Secretary of State for

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However, committee mem-

bers refused to give listed

building consent.

The chairman, Robert Vigars,

said the horse

ramp was a "fascinating piece

of industrial archaeology".

Ashley Barker, head of the

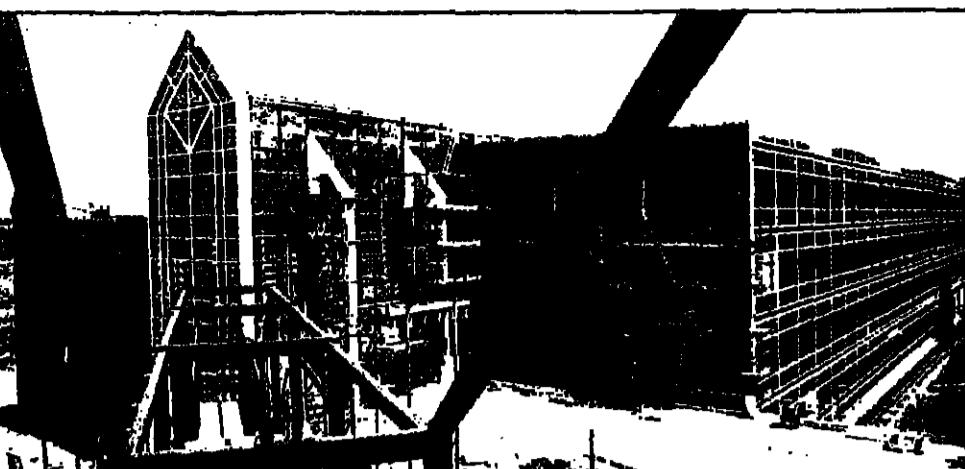
London Division, was doubtful

if the conservation argument

would be accepted at the forth-

coming public inquiry, because

News



Bank project duplicates itself

This is Chase Manhattan's new £20 million headquarters in Bournemouth, designed to meet strict US regulations which dictate the duplication of all data banks so that should one half be destroyed by fire the other half will survive.

Designed by American architects Skidmore Owings & Merrill with the Thomas Saunders Partnership, the steel-frame building has been dubbed "the giant greenhouse" because of the huge, laminated sheets of green glass and the vast 100m atrium rising to a diamond-shaped roof.

The curious "energy centre" — a satellite building housing the generator, chiller and main power source — is also in two identical halves separated by bomb-proof walls. It has been built using bricks taken from a local farm building.

The engineers, Young Austin & Young, have installed a heating system powered by electricity — eradicating the need for boilers, pipework and radiators.

Throughout the building the temperature is regulated automatically by a computer-controlled micro-reporter on the side pillars in the main building.

Cooled water used in the air-conditioning units is returned to the satellite building at the end of its cycle, where it is then treated with a special chemical to kill Legionnaire's Disease bacteria.

A covered walkway leads from the main building to recreation facilities.

Using the "fast track" method of construction — holding the glass panels onto the frame — means that the new complex will meet Chase Manhattan's tight October deadline, and the arrival of the Big Bang.

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RIBA Conference

'Uncaring' attitude to cities attacked



"OUR cities have great architectural potential but we have sadly neglected and mistreated them with insensitive development."

Alfie Wood, chief architect-planner with English Heritage, opened his look at the heritage of cities by criticising the architect and town planner for their apparently uncaring attitude towards urban areas.

The challenge to architecture and town planning is to provide innovative schemes for economic and social urban revival, complete with the human dimension which was so sadly lacking in the developments of the 1960s," he said.

"Conservation of historic buildings although only 2 per cent of the nation's stock, is a key element in managing the revival of run-down cities. It demands inventiveness coupled with sensitivity on the part of the

designer, particularly in finding new uses for structures which can become the springboards of regeneration.

"Long-term liabilities can be made to be a city's most valuable development asset."

Wood constantly reminded delegates to remember who they are designing for.

"Town planners and architects should plan and design for the people living and working in the city," he said.

Ridley said the move to impose communal values rather than private values on people

people want to live," he said, but offered the audience few clues as to how this would be done.

One way forward was for architects to work closely with those for whom they build. The "client", "patron" or the "community" — depending on financial status — must communicate with the architect to make sure they got a building which said "something about them as people or about their corporate image".

Although it was widely rumoured that he would be giving details on the eight new urban development corporations announced last week, he made only a passing reference to inner-city regeneration.

"One of the things I want to do is concentrate resources on reviving cities as places where

had resulted in "poor quality, unattractive architecture" which had failed.

In a 30-minute speech he referred, more than once, to the "bureaucratic interference of planners", but said the "crisis of confidence" among architects was mostly the fault of patrons.

"They ask you to build unlivable-in buildings, to subscribe to the values of planners and councillors instead of to those of tenants and owners."

"When conditions are mo-

"I believe there is still a future for stone — for if I can dress stone, why can't others?" he asked, and later went on to suggest that the unemployed could be taught stone dressing as a skill.

He advocated "national architectural style" and the "embellishment of buildings by works of arts and crafts".

Ridley's final message was addressed to the planners: "It is their interference which impedes creativity and restricts innovations, resulting in an overall architectural blandness.

"I hope the day will come soon when I can advocate freedom from all control."

Only then would it be possible to "foster a climate of confidence in British architectural design so that genius would flourish without bureaucratic interference".

Wearing her city planner's hat on Friday, Scott Brown estate agent some of the urban centre she had been involved with since 1968. She looked at Las Vegas, Philadelphia, Memphis and Boston, and reminded conference of the relationship between architecture, planning and socio-economic conditions.

More than 50 per cent of the population of Memphis is black, and one problem Scott Brown had to conquer in her plan for the city was the possibility of allowing the community to become split down the middle.

Her task was more to integrate social strata, allow commercial and social growth and provide the base for a city to benefit from better housing and road systems.

Denise Scott Brown... three-

constrained then the greater design ability is called for," said said.

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Ken Livingstone... provocative speech.

the Labour Party came to power, the GLC could be recreated in three months, but would be invested with more powers.

Quoting Winston Churchill, he ended by saying the shift of power away from the centre would be the only way to "set our communities free".

Livingstone said that when

he said the defensive mentality of councils meant all they could talk about was how to avoid cuts.

But the Government's squeeze on local government spending was destroying communities and imposing central standards so that "everybody

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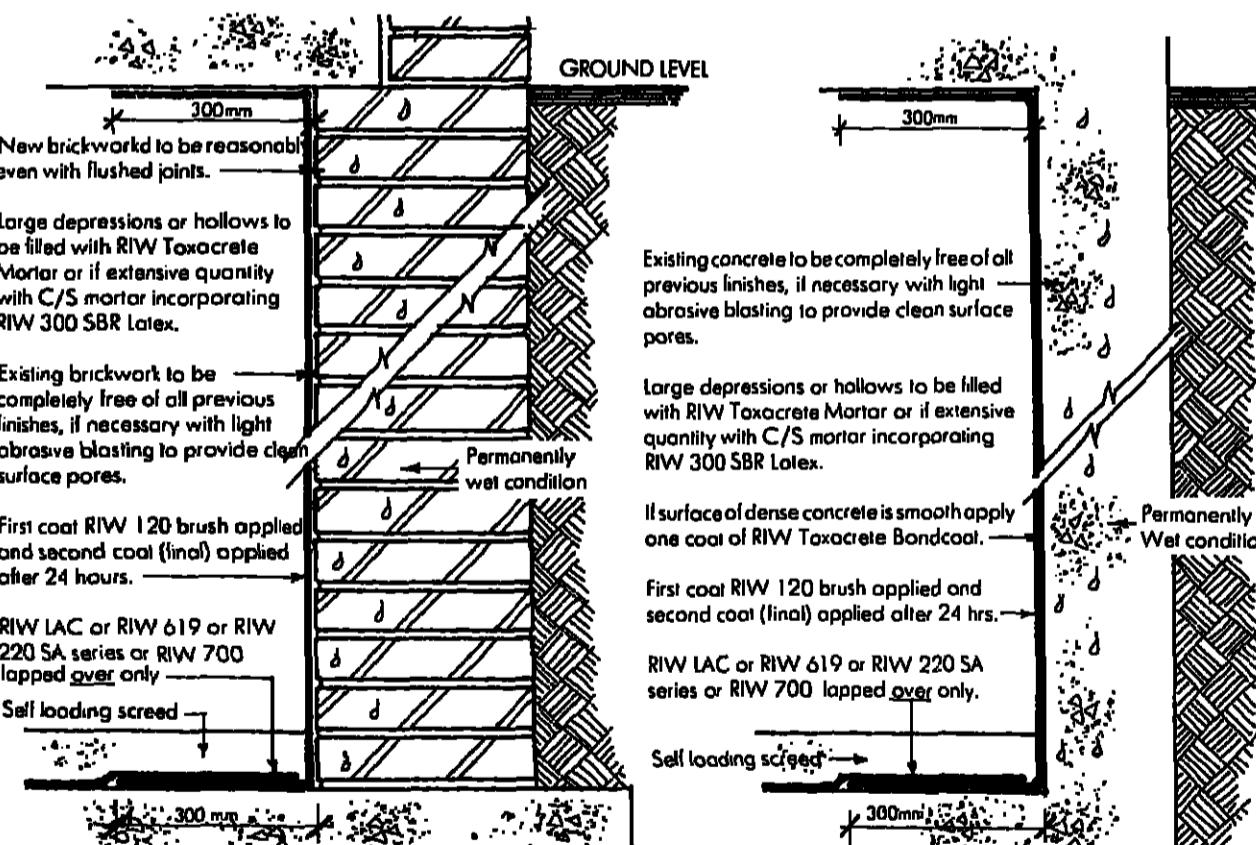
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RIW Toxcrete Bondcoat applied
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Wet substrate

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Letters

Being awkward over energy

From Miles Scott

I READ WITH interest the results of your poll which found architects uncommitted on energy conservation (*Supplement* July 11). In April the RIBA had an article posing the question "Do architects care about energy saving"; author Ted Stevens thought not.

It is taken for granted that architects should care about energy saving and be committed to energy conservation. However, a contrary view is possible. In a letter to *BD* (November 2, 1979), Boyd Auger wrote: "Energy saving is irrelevant to the problems of architecture, and if there is an energy crisis, politicians and physicians will provide the solution, not architects." Auger is an architect and chartered civil engineer, author of *The Architect and the Computer*, contributor to RIBA computer conferences etc.

In my view, when someone with such credentials seriously questions the energy bandwagon vis à vis the architect and architecture, notice should be taken. Needless to say, Auger's letter was greeted by complete silence. I wonder why?

In my view too many people wearing emperor's clothes are active on the architectural scene and are creating a career structure for themselves through writing reports on perceived "problems" and prescribing nostrums and fresh impositions for the architectural profession (eg. cpd). Nowadays there is a veritable spate of such stuff. Anyone who rocks the gravy train by posing awkward questions is written off as a troublemaker or crank.

Miles Scott

London SW7

Fighting apartheid

From Abe Hayeem, chairman, UK Architects Against Apartheid (UKAAA)

IN response to the escalating horror of events in South Africa over the past decades, culminating in a permanent state of emergency, UK Architects Against Apartheid has recently been formed to campaign for

are really that significant taken over the life of the building.

As to myself paying £250 out of their own pockets, the building surveyors see thousands of proposals each year, adjudicate upon hundreds of cases of potentially dangerous conditions and are called in to investigate many accidents. Their advice is based on facts and a massive amount of relevant experience; if you ignore it, or get away with less than they recommend, don't expect them to pay.

David Johnson
Manchester

Improving relations

From Lord McAlpine of Moffat, president, and Robert Foster, chairman, Building Industry Youth Trust

WE would like to report progress on our Silver Jubilee Appeal for funds to extend our work for young people, often disadvantaged and sometimes handicapped. Over the past 25 years our youth trust (the building industry's own charity) to help in the promotion of worthwhile leisure-time activities for young people throughout Great Britain has helped over 600 units of boys' and girls' clubs, scouts and guides, sea and air cadets and the physically handicapped to get buildings up and open for their use, subject to the condition that there be no restrictions of class, creed, colour or sect.

This year, our jubilee year, coincides with the special needs of a number of areas in which disturbances with ethnic origins have highlighted a need for special and urgent efforts to bring together young people of different races in the same premises and with a common purpose. So we are happy to report that early support of our appeal has enabled us to make a substantial grant to the Broad Plains Youth Club in Bristol, in an area where severe rioting highlighted a need to bring together young people of different races. That club (a member of the National Association of Boys Clubs) is now open and one of our trustees, following a visit, writes: "The club leader is full of praise for the highly supportive role of the black volunteer helpers. It is equally significant that white members have spontaneously urged their black club-mates to become involved in the club's committee".

We at the Building Industry Youth Trust think this is one of the best ways to combat racism. Accepting that stairs are where most accidents in buildings happen, all previous Building Regulations have required stairs to be at a constant pitch throughout, a tradition which is as safe as possible. The latest Regulations do not stipulate this but leave it as a matter for interpretation. PCPT and now the minister have one point of view and I have another. It is up to architects to decide which interpretation to adopt and whether a few additional steps

enjoys the economy of repetition of house types, but it goes against the instincts of architects to extol the virtues of repetition. However, at a time of mounting claims of professional negligence against architects, repetition in housing must be in the public interest.

In my booklet I put forward a programme for dealing with this difficulty in a way that does not prejudice the quality of the environment. Briefly, the proposal is that if all impending local authority projects were published nationally, architects (including local authority staff) could submit details of completed buildings that may be repeatable. The most successful buildings would then be repeated until the authors became identified with their own "product". These "products" could be continuously refined and need not be exact copies. Liabilitywise, building one's own "product" is much less hazardous than building a prototype.

Prototypes are all very well for commercial buildings etc., particularly when the funds come out of the public relations account. Housing is another matter.

Ken Dixon
London NW2

Those architects, students, members and individuals of allied professions and industries concerned and outraged by the abhorrent apartheid regime, who wish to join UKAAA and participate in the social, economic and cultural boycott of South Africa, should contact UKAAA's membership secretary, Glen Robinson, at 69C Abbey Road, London NW8 OAE.

Abe Hayeem
London SW2

Step into controversy

From David Johnson, city architect, Manchester

IN bashing the chief building surveyor (*Letters* July 4), Phillips, Cutler, Phillips, Troy ought to be aware that building control in Manchester is my responsibility and the view that staircases should not steepen in the direction of travel is mine.

Accepting that stairs are where most accidents in buildings happen, all previous Building Regulations have required stairs to be at a constant pitch throughout, a tradition which is as safe as possible. The latest Regulations do not stipulate this but leave it as a matter for interpretation. PCPT and now the minister have one point of view and I have another. It is up to architects to decide which interpretation to adopt and whether a few additional steps

approach to cpd can be obtained from the continuing education unit at King's Manor York.

Angela Fisher
York

McAlpine and Robert Foster
Building Industry Youth Trust
87 Worship Street
London EC1A 2BE

Conference welcome

From Ian Finlay, chairman, RIBA Community Architecture Group

THE announcement that the first major conference on community architecture is to be held November is excellent, and the organisers are to be congratulated on their efforts in setting up this event.

The strength and uniqueness of the conference is that it enjoys the support of a wide range of both professional and voluntary organisations, many from the National Community Partnership, which is entirely consistent with the emerging view that a broad approach is required to tackle environmental ills.

I for one hope the conference will "put to the sword" the notion that any one profession or organisation can claim exclusive rights to dominate community architecture. There is a collective responsibility between all agencies to work closely together with local people to allow our environment in general and inner cities in particular to become vigorous and happy places again.

Ian Finlay
London W1

Housing repetition

From Ken Dixon

I WAS interested in the letter in your July 4 issue from Charles Thomson on the cost comparison between state and private housing. I draw to the attention of those readers who share this interest my booklet *The Political Economy of State Housing in the UK* which includes a foreword by Norman Macrae, deputy editor of the *Economist* (£1.50 from 78 Crews Road, London NW2 2AD).

Architects have a problem on

this question. The private sector

enjoys the economy of repetition of house types, but it goes against the instincts of architects to extol the virtues of repetition. However, at a time of mounting claims of professional negligence against architects, repetition in housing must be in the public interest.

In my booklet I put forward a programme for dealing with this difficulty in a way that does not prejudice the quality of the environment. Briefly, the proposal is that if all impending local authority projects were published nationally, architects (including local authority staff) could submit details of completed buildings that may be repeatable.

The judgments illuminated many principles about the contractor's programme, information timing, claims procedure — you name it, and you will find one of the contractual problems you have faced. The judge was not confusing one, one realised that he was sticking to the commonsense interpretation of the Joint Contracts Tribunal, rather than particular words in the JCT standard form of contract. Throughout, it seemed to hold that a failure, either contractor or architect, to provide information "by the book" did not absolve the other from getting on with whatever was practical for the works, finished and paid for fairly.

Perhaps others will comment on what should become a textbook case.

Hugh Blake
Bristol

Tailor-made education

From Angela Fisher, Continuing Education Unit, Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies

M H CRITCHLEY is right when he says (*Letters* June 27) that continuing professional development must be relevant to "the world of commercial decisions, professional indemnity and rapid technological change". Further reading of the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies' annual programme would show him that it is offering exactly this sort of cpd through its continuing education unit, which plans, designs and manages tailor-made programmes of professional development with individual offices or groups of small offices.

Though you correctly referred to Macintosh Haines & Kennedy who are acting on behalf of Isle of Wight, who gave advice on Building Regulations and other technical aspects during the design period you did not mention that the design, which was worked out in conjunction with Barry Sharp and myself, was prepared by Kjae & Richter of Aarhus.

The detailed design promise to be one of the most significant housing schemes in Docklands and will be built with high-quality materials with, I am sure, the meticulous detail that one sees in Professor Richter's splendid concert hall and other buildings in Aarhus.

Ted Hollamby
Bexleyheath
Kent

have often been forced to do so to prevent the despoliation of handsome buildings by the excessive and inflexible demands of fire officers. One I recall was for the encasing in heavy framework and reinforced glass of the imposing grand staircase at Mentmore, Paxton's Victorian Jacobean mansion in Buckinghamshire.

The Maharishi's gentle gang, having bought the house after its denuding of the Rosebery treasures by Sotheby's, were setting up a "college" with some residential accommodation. Hence the prescribed additional precautions.

No heed was taken of the fact that occupancy rates would still barely have matched those of a fully staffed country house, nor of the new owners' abilities in the levitation field.

Some, though by no means all, of such demands are bluffs based on no specific legislation. So, when faced with especially egregious "recommendations" subtly linked with implied threats about withholding other necessary approvals, conservationists would seek aid from architect Alan Parnell.

Sometimes the mere mention of his name was enough to induce a more flexible frame of mind.

Parnell is well known to be at least as knowledgeable as the "experts"; he also has the knack of speaking their language. So much so that he has been elected president of the Institution of Fire Engineers, a worldwide organisation.

It is the first time that anyone outside chief fire officer rank has held such a position — and a mere architect too!

Impressive timing

A DECADE older than the above, Brynmawr Rubber Factory was built in south-east Wales by some of my then heroes teaching at the AA, who had banded themselves into the Architects' Co-Partnership.

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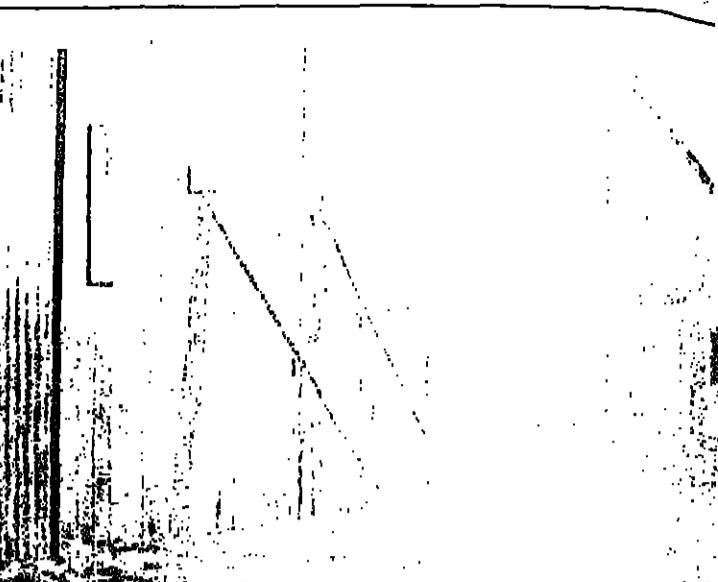
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Goldfish, Chloe Cheese. 36cm x 38cm.



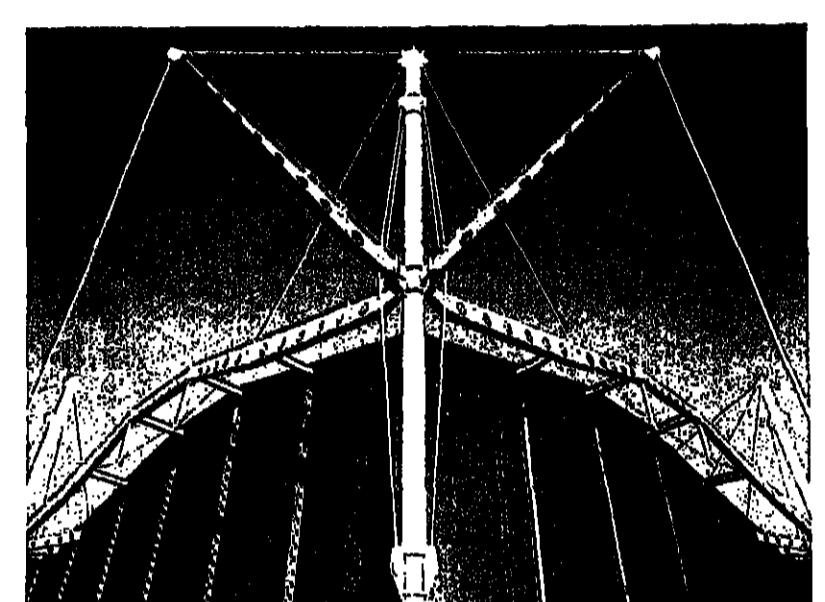
Old Barn, summer, Appledore, Norman Stevens. 59.5cm x 80cm.



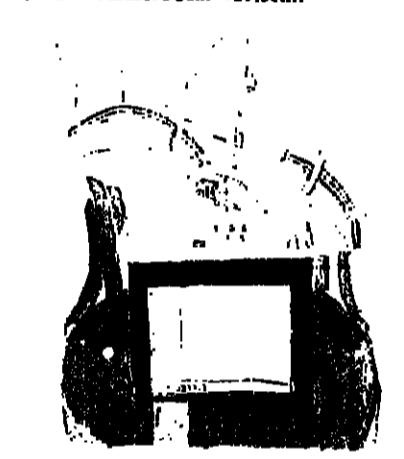
Construction Company, Norman Stevens. 60.5cm x 83cm.



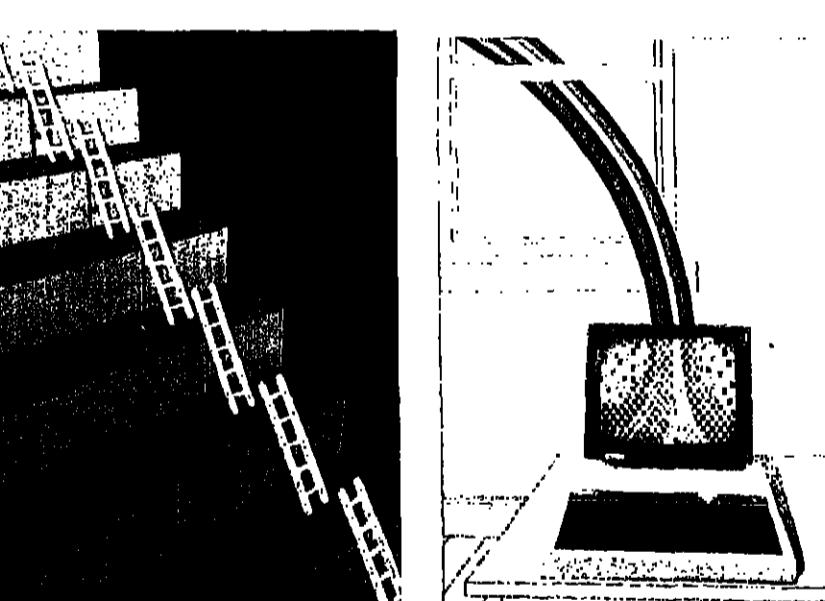
Hat, Chloe Cheese. 36cm x 39.5cm.



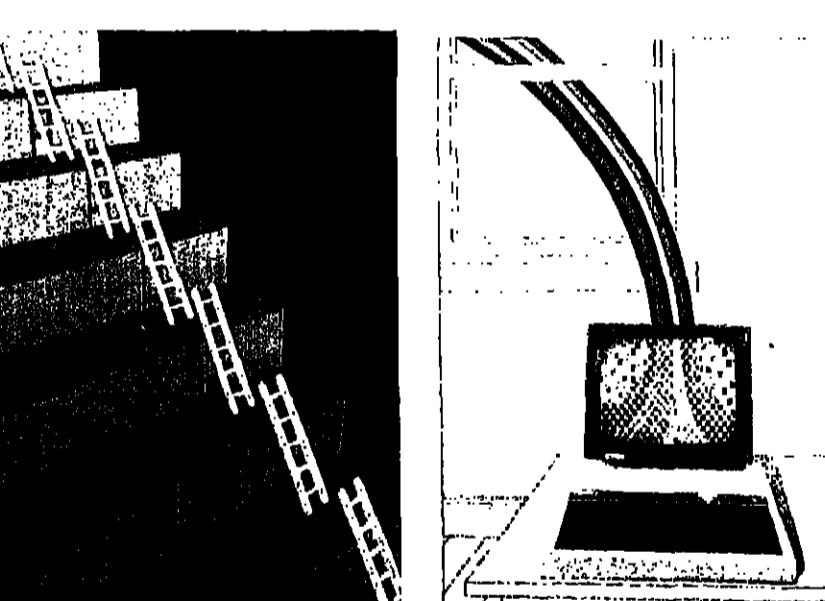
IBM Glazed Arcade, Ben Johnson. 51cm x 73cm.



Renault Centre, Ben Johnson. 93cm x 68.5cm.

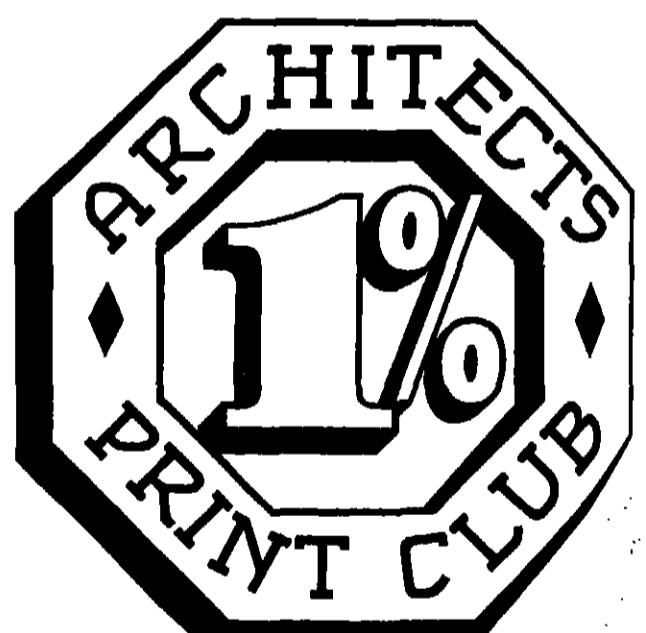


Steps & Ladders, Patrick Hughes. 41cm x 59cm.



Colour Process, Patrick Hughes. 57.5cm x 40cm.

BUILDING DESIGN



Pick a picture

Paul Finch, editor of Building Design, introduces the first in a series of print offers for readers.

We are launching this new print club to encourage the purchase of works of art to brighten and enhance the places where architects work, and the buildings they design for their clients.

The range in prices of this first selection is wide one, and we intend to continue with this policy, so that in each offer there will be something which an individual might purchase. We believe it is more likely, however, that purchasers will want to consider buying for their own offices, or as gifts for clients moving into a new building. We have given the club the "1 percent" tag as a reference to the "1 percent for art" idea,

intended to increase the attention paid to art in the creation of buildings; our hope is that we will attract enough interest to be able to start commissioning artists ourselves, in addition to offering work already completed. Our partners in launching the club are Mallabar Contemporary Arts and Corian Studios, the highly respected printer. We believe the presentation of prints such as these is an excellent way to improve the image of an office, and an appropriate way to "round off" a successful commission. I hope this initial selection of prints proves attractive, and that this will prove to be the start of a long and interesting series.

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Scorpio

No opening for man who closed show

THE astonishing depths to which some public bodies will sink in their efforts to erase the past is well-illustrated by the sorry tale of the Kingston school and its summer show, launched last week.

Someone had the bright idea of holding it in the ballroom of the Royal Festival Hall and giving it the title "Architects can't dance". Someone else had the even brighter idea of inviting the former commissar of the hall, one Ken Livingstone, to open proceedings.

But when the London Riddi Body found out about this, it ground into action and made its views about this sort of thing extremely clear. *That man* was not to be allowed back in the building. Livingstone was not the only person who didn't open the show. Community boffin Brian Anson was invited to do so, but then distinuted three days before the event — another face unacceptable to someone. Nick Grimshaw eventually did the honours.

I am also told that the LRB, on hearing that Livingstone was a guest speaker at the RIBA conference, decreed that no architect employed by it should attend in working hours.

PS. Kingston head of school Dennis Berry is to leave shortly. Prospective successors are studying their maps to find out how you actually get there.

Peace broke out — again — between Rolland and Finlay following top-level talks.

Part of the deal was that items about our beleaguered president stop appearing in *Scorpio*. The trouble is, Finlay rightly pointed out, he doesn't write it — something which I am happy to confirm. However, for a small consideration I shall be happy to enter into direct negotiations myself.

Mansion house pair

I AM becoming increasingly concerned about the eccentric behaviour of my chums in Saville Row who now work for the high-profile English Heritage.

Reports reach me from the West Country of a docks conversion which has been bedevilled by dotty demands for respect for the building's architectural integrity. Replacement slates had to come from a British quarry — though identical and less costly alternative Spanish imports were offered; all defective roof trusses had to be repaired in situ (even to have temporarily lowered them to ground level to make the carpenters' task easier would, it seems, have destroyed some strange magic spell); and the suggestion for a new form of cut pointing, involving the use of the edge of a 2p coin, was only abandoned when the bricklayers threatened strike action.

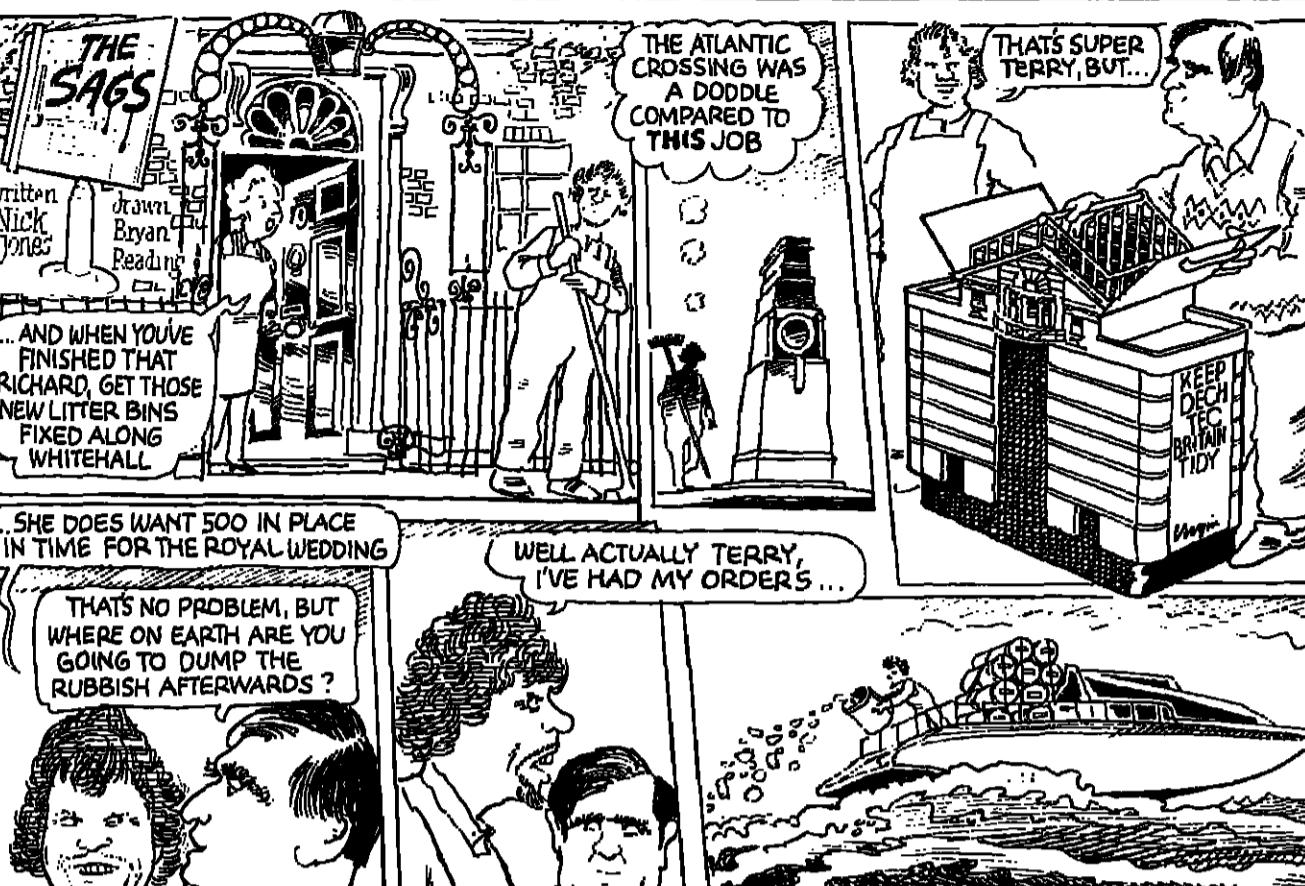
My sympathies to Michael Manser, who fell foul of these arch — not to say arcane — preservationists, via the abandonment of plans to convert Decimus Burton's St John's Lodge, on Regents Park's inner Circle, into a private art gallery. All this stuff about the City of London speeding up its processes and encouraging development is pr nonsense. Why is it taking the planning committee until the autumn to consider the Stirling/Falumbo Mansion House mark two scheme?

10 years ago

LARGE cracks have appeared in the great dome of Florence Cathedral. Tourist traffic is blamed for the cracks, caused by vibrations that are at times equivalent to a small earthquake.

Building Design, July 16, 1976.

Statistics



NEW RENDER TECHNOLOGY

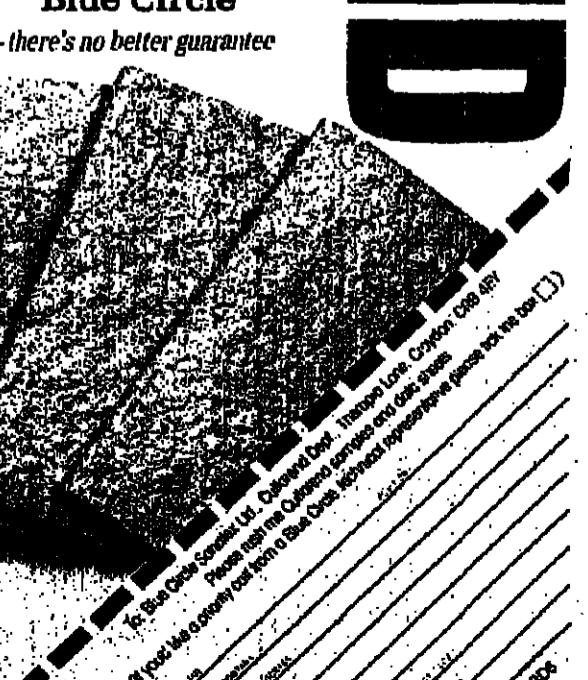
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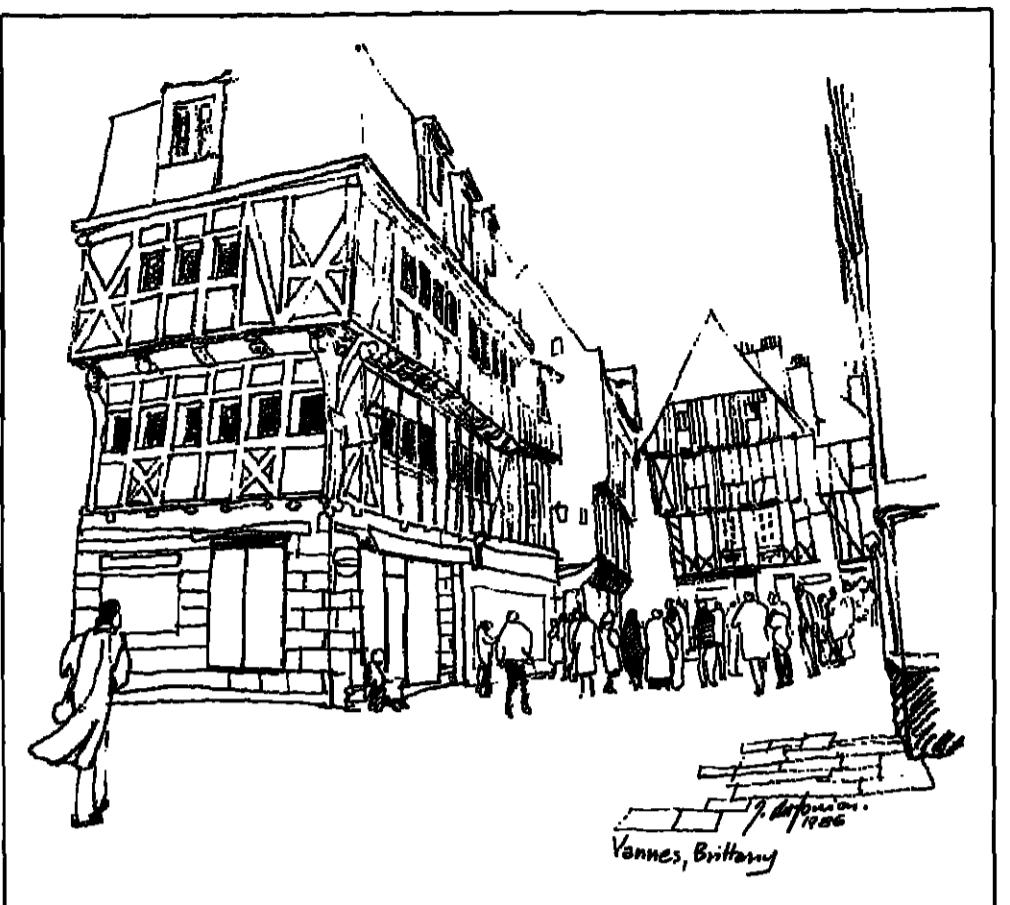
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Overseas notes



Vannes, Brittany: a little white lie?

1. The Fireplace Book by Roxana McDonald. A practical guide, encompassing both functional and aesthetic considerations, to fireplace design, maintenance and restoration. Price £10.95.

2. Building Regulations Explained and Illustrated (Seventh edition) by Powell-Smith and Billington. Covers the new 1985 Regulations for all building types for England and Wales, with extensive illustrations and references to regulations and Approved Documents. Price £14.50 (paperback) £21.75 (hardback).

3. Hotel Planning and Design: a guide for architects, interior designers and hotel executives by Walter A Rutes and Richard H. Penner. Identifies the key opportunities in this field and analyses the planning and design criteria for nearly 30 different hotel types. Specialised and up-to-date guidance unavailable elsewhere. Price £49.50.

4. The Classical Orders of Architecture by Robert Chitham. Immediate line drawings and informative captions explaining the origins, development and practical usage of all the classical architectural elements. Invaluable to designers and fascinating for their clients. Price £16.45.

5. The Architect's Guide to Fee Negotiations by Ray Moxley. Competitive fee tendering has now become an essential part of architectural practice. This book sets out all the terms that have to be negotiated at each stage. Price £18.65.

6. Construction Project Management using Small Computers by Glen Peters. As well as explaining the principles of project management, this book explains how they can be applied on small computers and which particular systems are most suitable. Price £15.35.

7. Legal and Contractual Procedures for Architects by Bob Greenstreet. New edition of this popular reference work, which gives concise and simple guidance through the legal and contractual maze of everyday architectural practice. Price £9.85.

Architectural & Construction BOOKSHOP

The books listed below are available through the Architectural & Construction Bookshop. A special service for readers provided by Morgan-Grampian Construction Press.

8. Contractor's Claims: An Architect's Guide by David Chappell. Explains how to assess claims which give rise to contractor's claims for delays or expense, and how to deal with them when they do arise. Price £10.95.

9. Manual of Graphic Techniques 4 by Tom Porter and Sue Goodman. The latest volume in this series uses drawings and informative captions explaining the origins, development and practical usage of all the classical architectural elements. Invaluable to designers and fascinating for their clients. Price £16.45.

10. Specification 85 by David Martin. Eighty-second edition of this annual reference source for architects and specifiers in the construction industry. Volume 5 is a commissioned new volume devoted entirely to specification clauses. The six volume set is supplied in a library box. Price £57.30.

11. The Interior Design Workbook: Job Record and Diary by David Fry FSAI RIBA. Fills a considerable gap in providing interior designers, with a working tool which sets out all the stages of an interior design project. Price £10.95 (paperback) £15.35 (hardback). Inc. P+P.

12. AJ Introduction and Complete Index to the 1985 Building Regulations Briefly explains what are the main changes; how to find all the references to any subject; a checklist of which British Standards are involved by each section plus unique detailed subject index to every topic covered. Price £8.25.

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French dressing

CAPABILITY Brown was once approached by a wit with the remark that he was prepared to die first, if only to see heaven before it was landscaped with rolling hills and artificial lakes.

So it is today, when touring the magnificent restorations of entire streets in the gem towns of Brittany, where the visiting architect may be forgiven for his cynicism in photographing the few, yet unrestored buildings, if only as a record of what real towns must have been like before 20th century gentrification.

Throughout this century the French have been producing an armory of laws and regulations for the rehabilitation of historic districts: from the 1913 Act for the protection of historic monuments to the Planning Act of 1985. During this period, in the words of one government official, "...the municipality became the motor of planning".

In Brittany last year, some £2.25 million was allocated to the replanning of 60 small town

centres. The same amount has been set aside in the 1986 budget. More than 75 per cent of the Brittany regional budget for this year is being used to promote economic activity and employment. Thus, half the labour force in the construction sector in Brittany is employed in rehabilitation work. Restoration is also absorbing two out of three craftsmen in the region.

Undoubtedly, there is more to learn about buildings' context from the past, where sense of place has been of great importance when adding buildings. But increasingly, there seem to be fewer and fewer opportunities for innovative application. Few new buildings have been allowed to have a say in these precious medieval settings.

Beyond the construction industry, the aim is to assist economic growth, housing and not least tourism. In Brittany, some 14 "tourist reception areas" have been created. In addition, there is a register of "small towns with character", comprising 15 members with the aim of exploiting the heritage value, mainly by promoting tourism.

Moreover, the patrons of conservation are not simply limited to hardcore environmentalists. In France, substantial sums are being invested directly into building restoration by no less a patron than the electricity authority — our own Electricity Board please note.

The Swedes have a proverb: "if you can't catch the bird, you lose the beauty of its flight". It would be sad if architecture in European towns was grounded at the expense of capturing nostalgia.

When walking around these charming places such as Rennes, Vannes, Vitre, Dinan, Lizio, Josselin and Rochebonne Terre, it is clear that many of these Brittany towns have received a highly polished veneer of restor-

ation: not a beam is out of place, not a stone remains undressed. Yet behind this facade of Breton charm is the nagging feeling that towns have been transformed into little villages from scruffy but living gentle precious and decorative objects.

Thus, the once forbidding castle entrance has been transformed into a leafy tranquillity, where once boiling oil threatened intruders, now hanging flower tubs greet the visitor. The historic dungeon has been tastefully turned into a reception hall; the meagre loo room, with its poignant sense of squalor, into a modern bathroom.

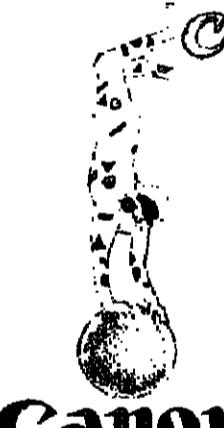
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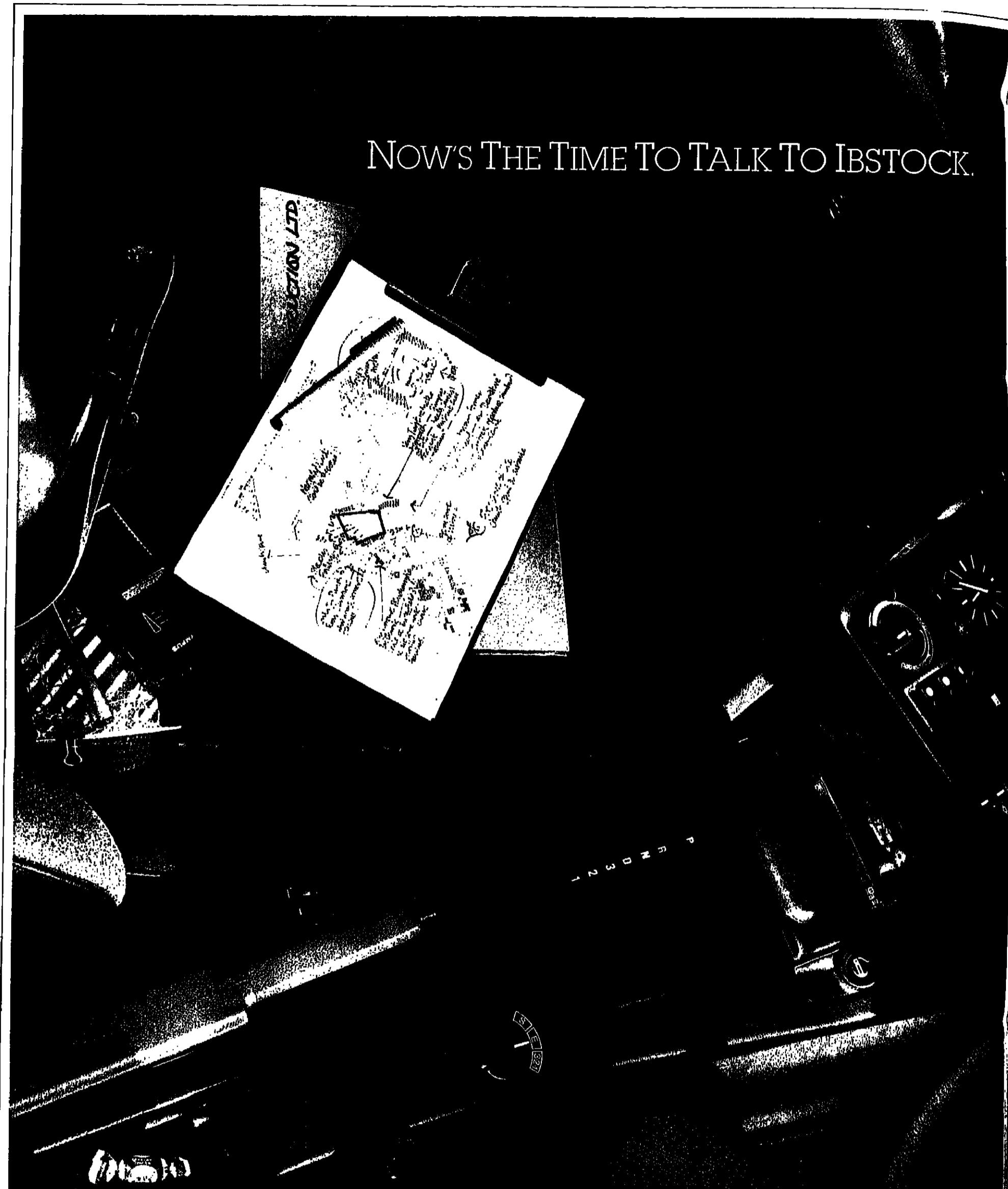
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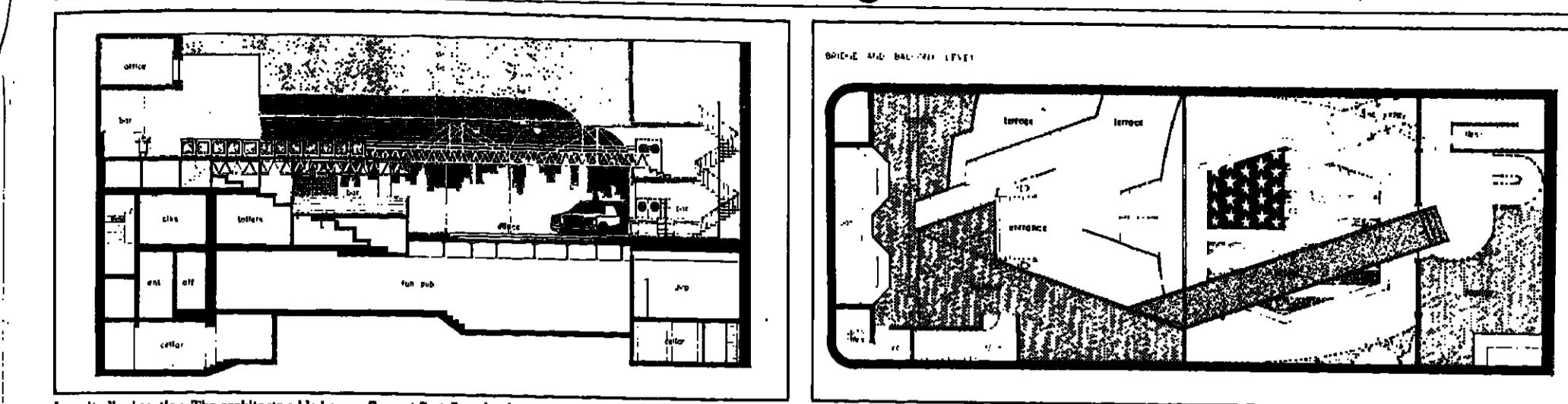
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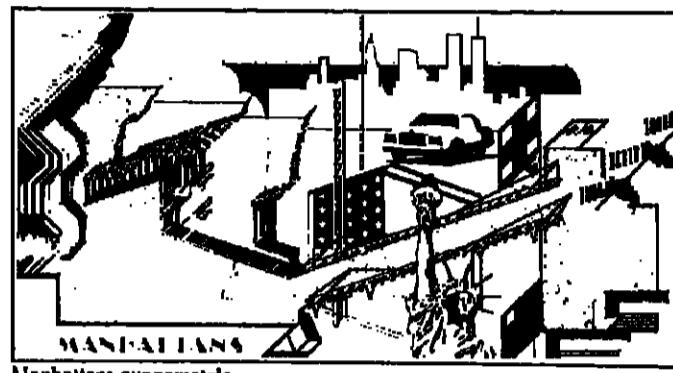


Longitudinal section. The architects added a new floor at first-floor level.

Bridge and balcony level plan.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER

Fiona Gorman goes nightclubs in downtown Barrow-in-Furness.



ONE could be forgiven for thinking that New York and Barrow-in-Furness have got about as much in common as chalk and cheese. But the Cumbrians would tell you different, for they have a smart new nightclub, Manhattans, which gives them a real taste of the Big Apple.

The nightclub was designed by the 15-month-old James Baird & David Newby architectural and planning practice in the circle of the town's old Coronation cinema. The architects' £300,000 design takes many of the dormant elements of the Art Deco building, such as the proscenium, tiering and dramatic ceilings and re-uses them to create a new angled geometry. A new floor has been added at first-floor level which sits between a series of terraces and levels built behind the proscenium. The terraces, built off the original tiers, lead to a balcony and onto an enclosed bridge spanning the dance floor.

It was this bridge which helped inspire owner Terry Smith to name the club Manhattans, recalling the entrance to the heart of New York. The nightclub — now the scene of amateur dramatics as well as drinking and dancing — has been designed to hit the eye as dramatically as possible using

heroic proportions, props, wit and eclecticism to match New York's personality. The construction is largely of brick to reflect the brownstone of Greenwich Village. The entrance to the club has been disguised as a subway entry marked by traffic lights and various areas of the club are labelled by upown and downtown street and avenue signs fixed to street lamps. These all form part of a computer-controlled light show. The hall can accommodate about 1,000 people comfortably and the architects and client aimed to enhance this feeling of space by creating a night sky using more than three miles of fibre optics to resemble 2,000 shimmering stars. Programmed flashes of lighting streak across the sky and illuminate the walkway.

An old Cadillac has been cut away so that it has apparently crashed into the wall and smoke spews out while the disc jockey runs his show from the inside. A replica of the Statue of Liberty and abstraction of the Manhattan skyline on screen-printed glasswork combine with the red, white and blue stars and stripes carpet to underline the theme.

Client: Terry Smith. Architects: James Baird, David Newby. Main contractors: Malcolm Goodwin. Paper Bar Suppliers: Ward Glass. Bass Brewery. Electrical contractor: Jim Symon. Shades: Screen Print.



Even the Statue of Liberty has a home here.

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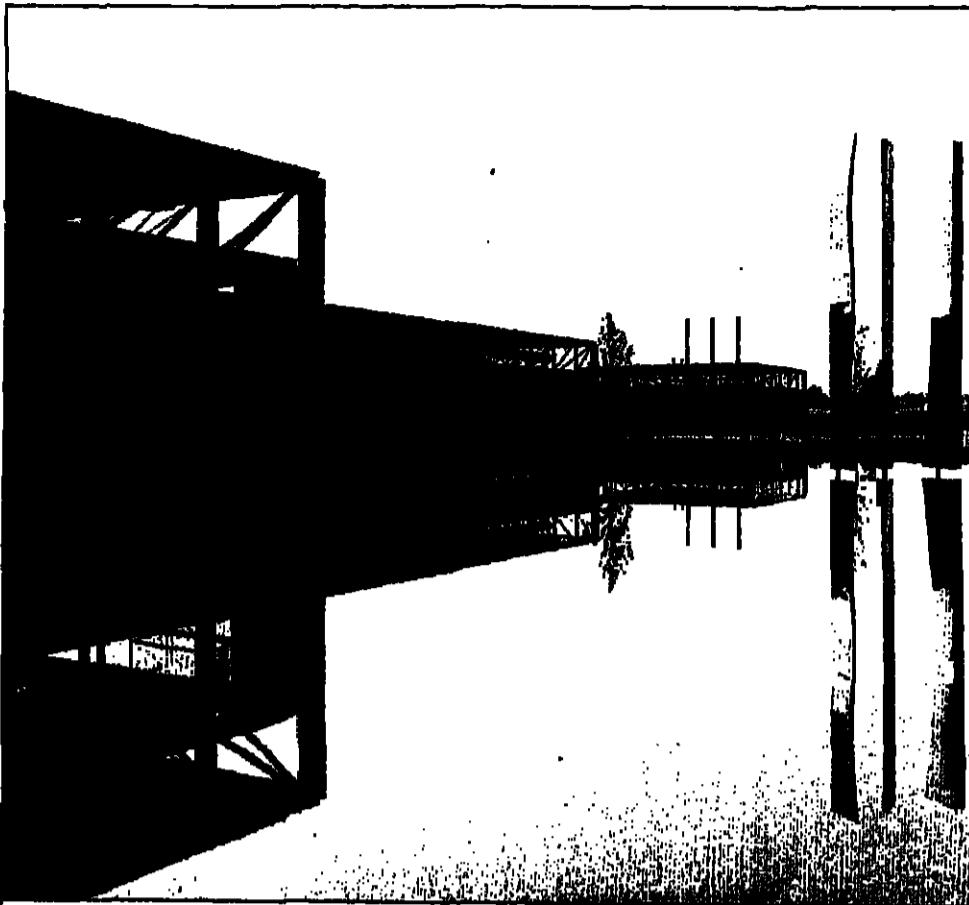
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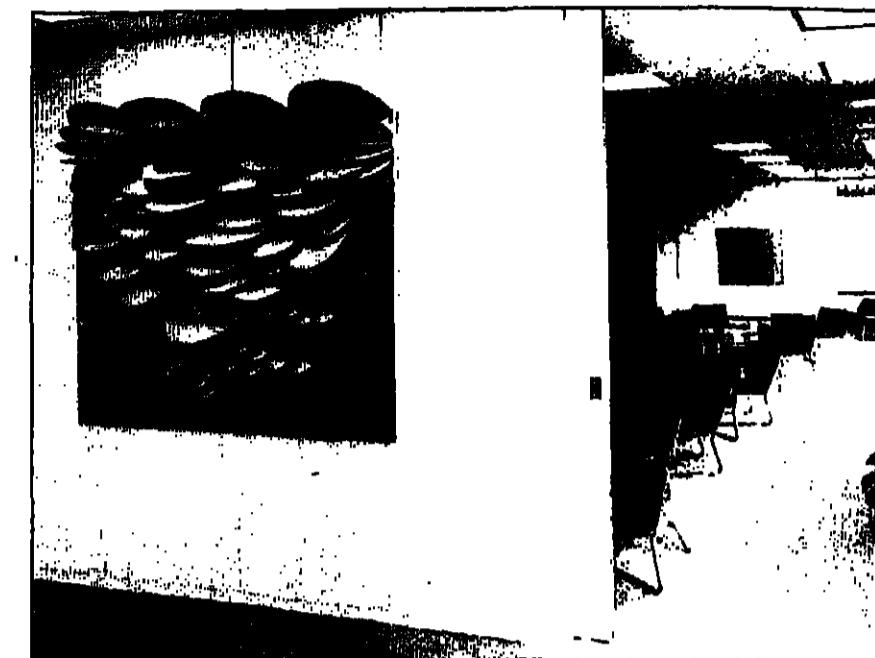
Practice profile

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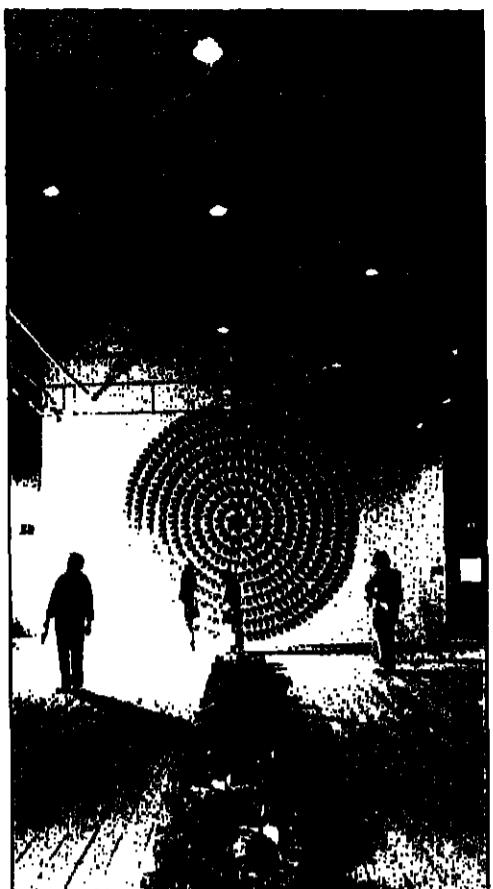
Fiona Gorman talks to an Irish practice which always designs with art in mind. Photos: John Donat.



Gerda Frommel's sculpture for the P J Carroll tobacco factory at Dundalk.



Derek Hirst's pictures define the corridors of the Bank of Ireland. The piece in the foreground is by Alessandro Scott Tallon Walker's studio for sculptor Michael Warren is designed to complement his work and his thinking.



Richard Long's mural for the Guinness Hop Store.



John Burke's sculpture for the Bank of Ireland.

THE IDEA OF UNITING ART WITH ARCHITECTURE COMES AS NATURALLY TO SOME PEOPLE AS A nip of whiskey in coffee — and is just as unwelcome to others. But few practices show such commitment to the concept as Irish architects Scott Tallon Walker.

"To me," says Ronald Tallon, "a building without works of art is empty. It's like a building without people." His opinion has been shared by the practice since the early days of founder Michael Scott.

Throughout his acclaimed architectural career Scott referred to his interest in art, making it the main focus of his attention after his retirement in 1975. His Irish Pavilion for the 1939 New York World Fair, for example, faces the world with a sculpture by Friederich Herkner and lettering by Eric Gill. These elements are not included as side artefacts, but integral parts of the design.

And so it has been ever since. It is his philosophy of entwining the two artistic strands which the practice, now led by son Niall Scott, Tallon, Eugene McLernon and Michael Aston, seek to promulgate. Potential employees are quizzed as to how often they attend exhibitions. Tallon, who has been a partner since 1958, explains: "It is a natural progression. We always think in terms of works of art in buildings. It used to be that there were paintings on buildings. Art has only recently been divorced from them."

The Bank of Ireland headquarters in Dublin — designed by the practice in the 70s — now boasts a modern art collection to

rebut those who seem reluctant to design with art in mind, perhaps fearing that artists may undermine their own creative inadequacies. Although Tallon acknowledges this crisis of confidence, he refuses to accept that a pluralist approach poses any threat to their designs or cramps their creativity. "We like to keep the interiors quiet, with use of natural materials as much as possible. People take on a presence in a building. It's the same with art. There is so much colour and variety in people, the nearest thing you can get to that is a painting."

It would appear that most of their clients agree. Tallon reckons seven out of 10 take to the idea of incorporating art within the overall design of the building, though one must bear in mind that many would not turn to the practice at all if they were not aware of what STW had to offer.

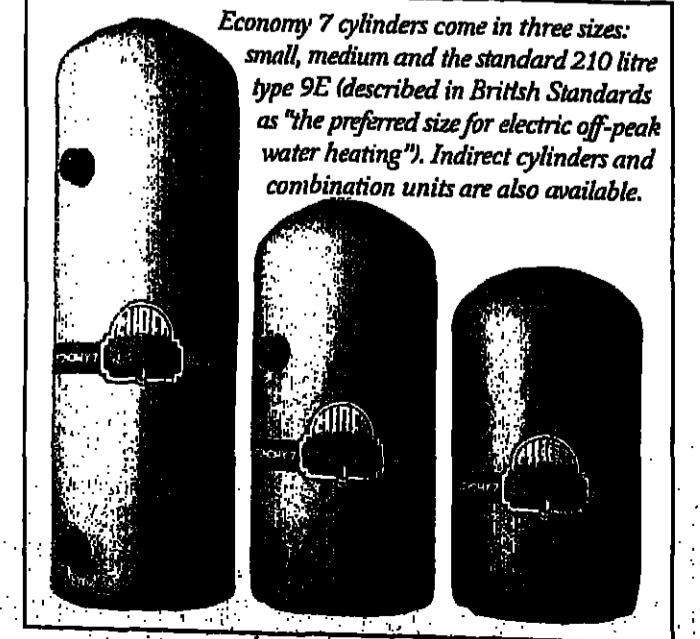
And of those who do not want art inside or out? Some will get away with a stylish building without a trace of sculpture or painting, while others may be subject to a little gentle persuasion.

Scott Tallon Walker point out that not only can works of art help introduce a more pleasing working environment and give patronage to artists who may otherwise receive little work, but they can also represent a sound investment.

Scott Tallon Walker point out that not only can works of art help introduce a more pleasing working environment and give patronage to artists who may otherwise receive little work, but they can also represent a sound investment.

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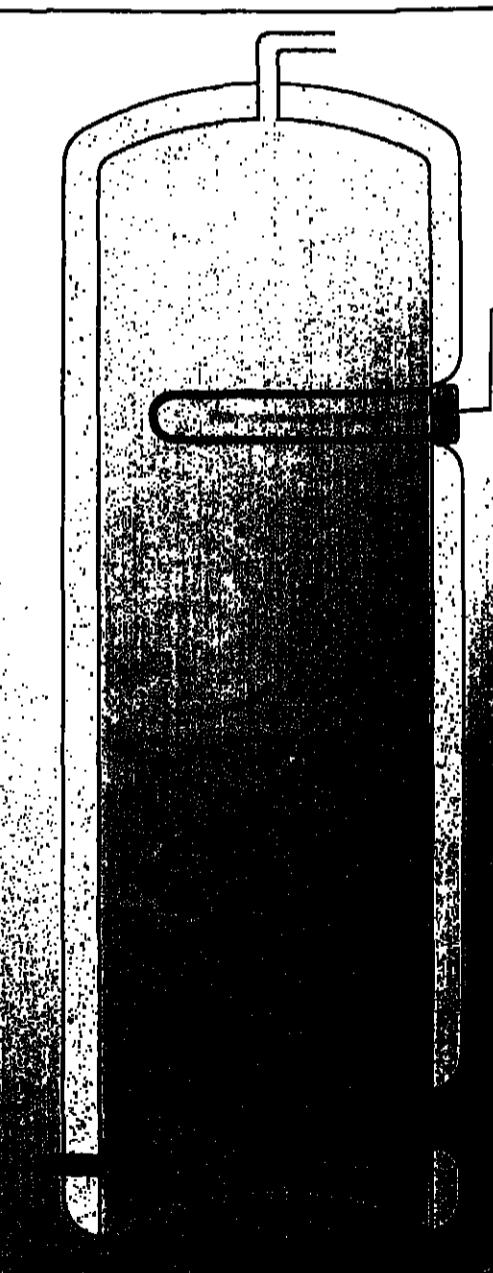
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New products

Compiled by Harold Hudson

All buildings decay — some more than others

INTRODUCING a recent seminar on "building deterioration", organised jointly by the Building Materials Group of the Society of Chemical Industry, the BBA and Taywood Engineering. Dr D Brown of Taywood Engineering made the point that as soon as a building started deteriorating commences. Forty per cent of the construction effort in the UK is now devoted to maintenance and repair, despite the fact that buildings are expected to last for 60 years.

Input to the proceedings included a contribution from Jack May on the difficulties of predicting in-use performance of materials, a paper by Steve Kelly on the assessment of plastic

materials' long-term performance, a paper entitled *Timber products versus time* given by J W Morgan of the BRE Princes Risborough Laboratory, two papers on climatic effects by other members of the BRE staff, a contribution on built-up roofing from Ruberoid and another on bricks and masonry from London Brick.

The one clear message was that causes most of the problems. Copies of the seminar papers are obtainable from The Society of Chemical Industry, Road and Building Materials Group, 14-15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS.

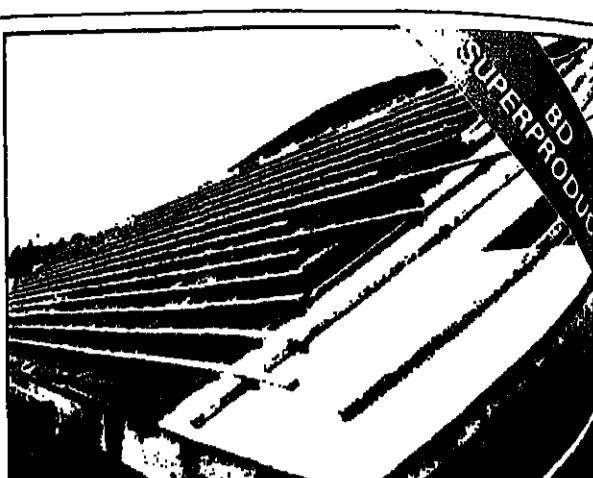
Harold Hudson

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This week

Today — Friday
Architectural conservation summer school 1986.
Venue: West Dean College, Chichester.
Details: The Administrator, West Dean College, Singleton, Nr Chichester, West Sussex.

Tuesday
Study tour to National Garden Festival in Stoke-on-Trent, organised by the Town & Country Planning Association.
Cost: TCPA members £25 plus VAT, non-members £30 plus VAT.
Details: Sally Scarlett, 01-903 8903.

Tuesday
A demonstration of FCG Computer Systems' computer packages for the building industry.
Venue: Building Centre, Store Street, London WC1. 11am, 2pm & 4pm.
Details: FCG Computer Systems 01-388 7145.

Wednesday
Spatial transition and the experience of movement, a design workshop in the series "Reading architecture", organised by the Polytechnic of North London.

Thursday
Alan Cameron, organised by Istock Building Products.

Friday
Annual exhibition of students' work at the Polytechnic of Central London.

Saturday
Alan Cameron, organised by Istock Building Products.

Sunday
Peter Henry Emerson, landscape photographer and writer.

Monday
Order and disorder, a one-day release course as part of the Design Workshop '86.

Tuesday
Organised by the North London Polytechnic.

Wednesday
Environmental Design, Room 131, The Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, London N7, Room 131, 10am.

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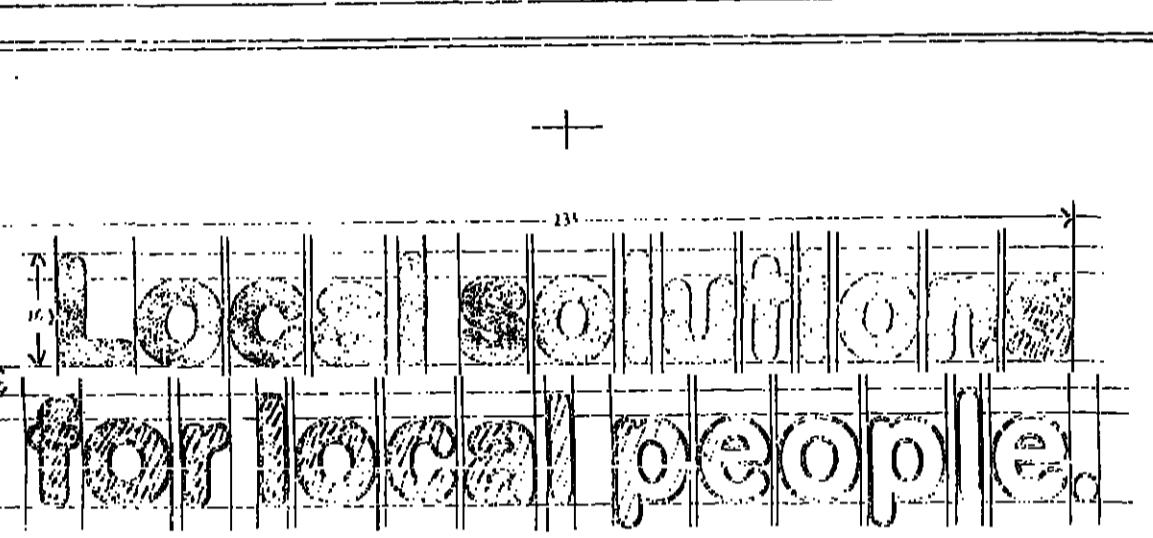
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Salary: £11,604

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Charrington



NORTHUMBERLAND
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Architect
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Architectural Technicians

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PO3 — PO4 £13,578 — £15,804

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Your brief would be to make sure the South Wales operation continues to run smoothly and efficiently. You'd be dealing with our Public Authority, Private Sector and Housing Association clients on a regular basis, also controlling a small team of people in the office - so you'll need to be articulate, presentable and with the sort of personality that finds it easy to get on with most people.

Previous experience in Housing would be useful. And we think it most likely that our ideal candidate will be aged mid - late 30's (but we could be wrong and are willing to be persuaded otherwise on age if you think your background and abilities match up to our requirements).

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ARCHITECTS

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PSA

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SERVICES
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Architect

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The successful candidate will be offered initially a three year engagement with the possibility of subsequent appointment to the permanent staff.

In the first instance please write stating age, qualifications, previous experience and salary required.

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Premises Division
National Westminster Bank PLC
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For an application form please ring Harlow 26801 Ext. 228 or write to Ellen Haines, Personnel Manager, International Distillers and Vintners Limited, Gilbey House, Fourth Avenue, Harlow, Essex.

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Wolverhampton Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community irrespective of an individual's sex, ethnic origin or colour and from people with disabilities who have the necessary attributes to do the job.

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Queen's Buildings, Potter Street
Worksop, Notts. S81 0TS

The successful applicant will be required to assist generally in the Quantity Surveying Section with duties ranging from the feasibility stage through to final accounts.

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APPLICATION FORMS can be obtained from the Personnel Officer, Central Depot, Hundred Acre Lane, Carlton Forest, Worksop, Notts. S81 0TS (or telephone Worksop 476531, extension 138), and should be returned by the CLOSING DATE of 8 August 1986.

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£11,567 - £12,439 + Car

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Scale 4/5/6
£6,900-£9,591
(Re-advertisement)

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Applicants should have or be in the process of obtaining a relevant professional qualification, such as Part II of R.I.C.S. (Building Surveying Division) or T.E.C.C. Higher Certificate/Diploma or equivalent.

Application forms and further details can be obtained from the Director of Land and Buildings, Shire Hall, Warwick CV24 4RP. Tel. Warwick (0926) 493431 ext 5059.

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(PLEASE QUOTE REF: BD/29/86)

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Chartered Architects

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Please write giving brief details of career to date, phone for more details of territories, salary etc. to: Mr Mansell, Assistant Personnel Manager, Crittall Windows Limited, Manor Works, Braintree, CM7 6DF. Telephone: Braintree 24106.

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Salary Scale: £7,596-£8,480 (under review)

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Applicants must have an ONC or HNC with 7 and 5 years relevant experience respectively. Candidates who have alternative qualifications in an appropriate subject will be considered.

Experience in health building would be an advantage.

Application form and job description may be obtained from and should be returned to the Regional Personnel Officer

Yorkshire Regional Health Authority

Park Parade

Harrogate HG1 5AH

(quoting ref no PT17)

Closing date 1 August 1986

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Architects, Planners, Quantity Surveyors

ARCHITECT/URBAN DESIGNER

required by established busy practice in Central Cardiff. Design ability and experience in mixed use commercial developments essential.

The successful applicant will be expected to take an active role in expanding the Urban Design/Planning capacity of the practice and will be working in the close liaison with both Architectural and Planning Partners Associates on a variety of projects.

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LEEDS POLYTECHNIC

Faculty of Design and the Environment (formerly the Brunswick School of the Environment)

Applications are invited for the following posts in new departments to be established within the Faculty.

Department of Architecture and Landscape
PRINCIPAL LECTURER
 To be responsible for a major contribution to the academic leadership and development of courses. Applicants should be registered architects, and have considerable practice and teaching experience. Membership of RIBA would be desirable, but is not essential.

**SENIOR LECTURER (3 Posts)
 LECTURER II (1 Post)**

Candidates with proven expertise in Building Services, Fabrication, Computing, Architecture/History/Theory, or Energy, are invited to apply for the above posts. In addition to registration as an architect, applicants should be able to demonstrate active research interests.

LECTURER II (LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE)

Applications are invited from qualified landscape architects with experience in education and/or practice. Expertise is sought in the following areas:

Broadscale Green Structure design
 Urban Landscape design
 Rural Landscape and resource utilisation

A higher degree and active interests would be an advantage.

Salary Scales

Lecturer II: £8076 - £12,945

Senior Lecturer: £11,958 - £14,046 (bar)

£15,045

Principal Lecturer: £14,013 - £15,600 (bar)

£17,819

Details from: Mrs H Cole, Staffing Officer, Leeds Polytechnic, 25 Queen Square, Leeds LS2 8AF. Tel: (0532) 462365.

Closing Date: 8 August 1986 PLEASE ENCLOSE S.A.E.

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**Brent Development
 Architects**

Brent Development controls a large programme of capital projects and in an expanding work load a significant proportion is entrusted to private Architectural practices. As a result our Consultant Team for Housing Projects plays an important role in the ongoing establishing briefs with the Client Department, organising work and monitoring its progress to handover. Due to a recent promotion applications are now sought for:

**Consultant Liaison Officer
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Salary £11,880-£12,886 p.a. plus £1,138 L.W. and

allowances. As Head of the Consultant Liaison

Team for Housing Projects, you should be a suitably

qualified and experienced Architect or Surveyor, from

either the public or private sector, must be technically

able to liaise in refurbishment work and capable

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Brent is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications

are welcome from candidates irrespective of race,

nationality, ethnic, national origin, age, marital

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Application forms and job descriptions from the

Personnel Room 1, Brent Town Hall Annex, King's Drive, Wembley, Middx HA9 9BR returnable 8th

August. Telephone 01-903 0371 (24 hour Ansafone service). Reference number D/650 must be quoted.

London Borough of
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are seeking enthusiastic staff for the following vacancies in our Weybridge office.

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 an opportunity to be involved from inception with a variety of exciting new housing, retail and commercial projects.

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to work with our other historic building experts on the conservation of several important buildings.

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LESLIE JONES

Architects

McCarthy & Stone plc has grown rapidly through specialising in providing for the needs of the elderly and now has an extensive and diverse range of work programmed for the future.

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Work will primarily involve submissions for planning and building regulation approval and construction supervision. Candidates should be enthusiastic and enjoy working in a productive

and extremely busy environment.

Considerable opportunities exist for career advancement and an attractive salary and benefits are available to the right person.

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August. Telephone 01-903 0371 (24 hour Ansafone service). Reference number D/650 must be quoted.

1. ARCHITECT/TECHNICIAN

with particular interest in development of auditoria design, required to work in specialist group. Card model making/photographic ability useful.

2. ARCHITECT/TECHNICIAN

to join team responsible for refurbishment of Victorian Theatres.

Please apply with C.V., marking your application "Theatres" to Janette Payne at the above address.

London Borough of

BRENT

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In line with this policy we are seeking persons of high calibre for the following positions both based at our headquarters in Coleford, West Gloucestershire.

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Responsible for providing technical support to the company's sales division including co-ordinating technical design and manufacture of special ceiling systems and on site advice to installers and designers.

The successful applicant will ideally be in his/her late 20s, technically qualified to HTC/HNC standard in Building, with a minimum of 5 years experience in an architectural office.

Skilled draughtsmanship and an ability to communicate technical information with clarity is required and knowledge of C.A.D. systems, whilst not essential, would be an advantage.

Experience in health building would be an advantage.

Application form and job description may be obtained from and

should be returned to the Regional Personnel Officer

Yorkshire Regional Health Authority

Park Parade

Harrogate HG1 5AH

(quoting ref no PT17)

Closing date 1 August 1986

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 with proven experience on large scale commercial projects.

Please send us C.V.'s and examples of work to:-

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If you are HNC or HND, 25+ with general drawing skills and/or having office experience, our clients in Herts offer a super career opportunity.

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